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000 241 preeminence. Of the present conditions in Munsif the following could be an adequate description:

> In spite of its present unimportance, the mulberry has not deserted the Lebanese countryside. Many houses, and some of the more humble ones, are always surrounded by tiny terraces each one bearing one or two rows of these trees, with their low, truncated trunks and dense foliage, which, formerly, in the eyes of the peasant, were the clearest symbol of fortune. (Février, 1949b, p. 342; translation mine.)

Mulberries are grown in the *jdaur*, the deep, fertile soil near the houses. Other crops grown here are onions, potatoes, and legumes. The most important small cash crop is tobacco, grown under the restrictive quota system of the official tobacco monopoly.

Figs, olives, and grape vines are, for the most part, outside the village house-cluster. The figs are concentrated at Ḥilwi, but there are some higher up, where all the olives are.

Generally, an individual will have all figs or olives in one plot, but since one man's plot adjoins another's on the same terrace with no property marking of any kind, some terraces are confusingly mixed in appearance. There are some apricots and almonds, but they are apparently not too profitable. The fruit of the occasional date palms and prickly pears are harvested, but no particular care is taken of the plants, although on one occasion a man was observed fertilizing a female palm tree with the pollen of a male one.

Wheat is grown in limited amounts, chiefly in plots on which it is not considered worthwhile to spend the time and money required to develop a good orchard.

During the rainy season, the earth is plowed twice, primarily to keep it aerated and loose. In April and June it is plowed again, primarily to cultivate out weeds. After June, the hot, dry sunshine withers all small plants which are not tended.

In the spring, figs, olives and vines are pruned and checked for insect pests of which the only one observed was a species of weevil which bores under the bark. Inspection of, and necessary repairs to, terrace walls are carried on throughout the year.

Apricots ripen and are harvested in May. Almonds and figs come in June and July, and this is also the time for wheat harvesting and threshing. Grapes are harvested in August and September, olives in September and October. The last is the real harvest of the village, in which everyone who is able turns out into the fields to help. Men and boys climb into the trees to shake them or beat them with sticks. Women and girls do a large part of the gathering. The men press those which have been allocated for the purpose into oil. The olive mash which remains after the pressing is either used locally as fertilizer or it is sold to dealers who either resell it as fertilizer or have it made up into paper packets which are widely

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used as fuel in the city. In the village, brushwood is collected for fuel in addition to the importation of kerosene.

Animal manure is not used extensively as plant fertilizer because it is scarce. Recently this meager supply has been supplemented by British-made chemical fertilizers. Night soil is not used at all.

Animal husbandry is very limited. Each farmer has a yoke of oxen for traction and some have a few cows for milk. There are one or two donkeys in the village. Two farmers keep bees. The hives are formed in the large water jars (*jarra*) described earlier. Several of these, each split horizontally across the middle, are set in a row. The bees enter and go out by the narrow open neck. The honey is removed by separating the two halves of the jar, and half the honey is left for the bees. Some fowl are kept in the village, primarily for their eggs. Dogs are kept by some householders, and cats by more, for guarding and mousing, respectively. They are not treated as pets, or objects of affection.

It is the lack of water which so seriously limits agricultural productivity in the village. The possibility of drilling successful wells, even with modern equipment, is, as was noted in the first chapter, very remote. Irrigation lines, which affect the coastal strip lower than forty meters above sea level, have been extended almost to Ba'ishta from the River Ibrahiim to the south, and to the village of Madfuun, just north of Burbara, from the River Jawz. The Qurni has the misfortune of being halfway between these rivers, at the end of the line in both directions. It is also unfortunate in that since its coastline is more precipitous than surrounding areas, it has a smaller area of potentially irrigable land than the surrounding areas. Nevertheless, it would be of great help to the village if irrigation water could be brought to it.

CONCLUSION

This chapter can fittingly be closed with a series of quotations which summarize, high-light, or give wider perspective to some of the points which have been made. They do not require any comment except that of drawing the reader's attention to their dates, especially those of the last three.

> 1. It is probable . . . that it was on the slopes of the originally forest-clad mountains of ancient Phoenicia that rain agriculture began. (Lowdermilk, 1944, p. 415.)
>
> 2. The effort of the Lebanese has made this country capable of nourishing a relatively dense population. There are few mountainous regions so little favored by nature from which man has drawn such a great agricultural return. (Thoumin, 1936, p. 126; translation mine.)
>
> 3. The Syrian peasant is more like a miner than a farmer. (Himadeh, 1936, p. 92.)
>
> 4. Elsewhere man has cultivated the land: in the Lebanon he has made it. Elsewhere the harvest is the produce: here it is the soil. Man collects and carries to